

**Early Intervention Participation and the Influence on Later Parent Involvement**  
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**Questions:**

- (1) Is participation in an early intervention program (the Chicago Child-Parent Center Program) during early childhood (ages 3 to 9) associated with higher levels of parent involvement in children's education at school and at home?
- (2) Does parent involvement, at school and at home, mediate the effects of an early intervention program (the Chicago Child-Parent Center Program) on students' long-term school success (as measured by reading achievement at age 14, school dropout, high school completion, and highest grade completed)?

**Methods:**

Children who participated in the early intervention (the Chicago Child-Parent Centers: CPC) received up to 6 years of a comprehensive intervention; 1-2 years of preschool, kindergarten, and up to 3 years extended services in elementary school. Because one of the primary goals of the CPC Program is to enhance the family-school connection, parents were required to participate in the centers at least one half day per week. Of the 1,539 children in the original sample, 1,295 (84%) were included in this study sample. The families included in this study had either: parent ratings of their involvement in any elementary school survey, or at least 3 out of 6 teacher ratings on parent involvement in grades 1 to 6.

**Results:**

*Question 1:* Using hierarchical linear regression, even after considering family and child background characteristics, the following significant associations were found: (1) the number of years of CPC preschool was significantly associated with parent ratings of home involvement, (2) any CPC follow-on participation and the number of years of follow-on participation was significantly associated with parent ratings of school involvement, and (3) all levels of CPC participation (preschool and follow-on participation) were significantly associated with overall teacher ratings of parent involvement. Thus, involvement in CPC appears to be associated with greater levels of parent involvement in elementary school.

*Question 2:* Teacher ratings of parent involvement in grades 1 through 6, was a mediator between CPC preschool participation and both reading achievement at age 14 and highest grade completed by age 20. The association between CPC participation and reading achievement and highest grade completed was also mediated by teacher ratings of parent involvement in early elementary school and later elementary school. Parent ratings of home involvement were not a mediator between CPC preschool participation and reading achievement at age 14 or highest grade completed by age 20. Parent ratings of school involvement mediated the association between extensive CPC participation and reading achievement at age 14, but did not remain robust when the competing hypotheses were included in the model.

**Conclusions/Implications:**

This study found that family participation in the CPC program significantly increased teacher reports of parent involvement in elementary school, providing evidence that encouraging parent involvement as early as preschool may translate into greater parent involvement in elementary school years. Overall, children's participation in CPC was able to increase parent involvement in school and the effects were found through high school. Therefore, it appears that the effort put forth by teachers and parents can have lasting benefits well beyond the initial benefits of decreasing adult-child ratios in the elementary school classroom. Policies that enable parents to take time off from work to participate in school activities, without being penalized, can be an important resource for parents to increase parent involvement. Further, staff development in the form of in-service presentations by school administration, university educational programs, or school policies can all be important resources to educate teachers about the importance of the home-school connection and give suggestions on how to incorporate parents into the curriculum.